

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 14-19 and 23-24 are pending. Claim 1 has been amended. No new matter has been presented.

Claims 1-6 and 14-19 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0035620 in view of Nara, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0017620 and Sasaki, U.S. Patent No. 7,243,126. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites “a memory unit which stores a *shared folder management table which contains information about a plurality of shared folders* and states of a plurality of information processing apparatuses associated with the shared folders” (emphasis added). This feature is not taught or suggested by the asserted combination of references.

The Examiner asserts that Takahashi teaches a management table, but does not teach a plurality of shared folders. The Examiner then asserts that a person of ordinary skill in the art would have incorporated Sasaki’s teachings of shared folders to the state-of-connection management table to achieve the claimed shared folder management table. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The claimed “information about shared folders” is so different from the type of information stored in the state-of-connection management table of Takahashi that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to make the alleged combination. Specifically, the ON/OFF states of the multimedia devices stored in the state-of-connection management table of Takahashi relate to whether the devices are physically connected to the network. Takahashi, paragraph [0303]. The claimed “information about shared folders,” in contrast, is totally unrelated to the physical connectivity or other physical characteristics of the multimedia devices. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not have had a reason or motivation modify the state-of-connection management table of Takahashi to include the claimed “information about shared folders.”

The motivation provided by the Examiner for asserted combination is “to provide image share folders by providing a push type scanner apparatus capable of transmitting image data to the selected destinations.” However, such motivation is clearly a result of improper hindsight rather than specific teachings of the prior art. There is no indication in either reference that the plurality of shared folders can be managed and maintained in a table along with the apparatuses associated with them. Simply because Takahashi teaches a management table and Sasaki teaches shared folders storing image data does not provide a reason or motivation for a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Takahashi’s table to include information about shared folders. Thus, the asserted combination is not proper.

The asserted combination also fails to teach or suggest “a search controller which executes *searching of said shared folders*,” as recited in claim 1 (emphasis added). Nara, which the Examiner relies upon as allegedly teaching this feature, merely discloses searching and storing “the connection information and the user-condition information of all the devices on the network.” Nara, paragraph [0054]. Nara’s search controller does not teach accessing any folders stored in the devices. Thus, the asserted combination fails to teach or suggest this feature.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable. Claim 14 recites a similar feature as claim 1 and is also available. Claims 1-13 and 15-24 are allowable for their dependencies from an allowable claim.

In view of the above, each of the claims in this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no. **325772035900**.

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Respectfully submitted,

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